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BRAC; THE POOR HOUSE GIRL,

A DRAMA

IN THREE ACTS,

Roscoe H. Lee
BY

C. L. PIPER,

— TO WHICH IS ADDED —

▲ DESCRIPTION OF THE COSTUMES—CAST OF THE CHARACTERS—
ENTRANCES AND EXITS—RELATIVE POSITIONS OF THE
PERFORMERS ON THE STAGE, AND THE WHOLE
OF THE STAGE BUSINESS.

PRINTED FROM THE AUTHOR'S ORIGINAL MANUSCRIPT.

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BRAC; THE POOR HOUSE GIRL.



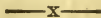
CHARACTERS REPRESENTED.

Elem Brac..... *A poor house girl adopted by Clarissa.*
Lot Bob Wilder..... *A summer boarder of Avoca farm.*
H.R. Frank Karl..... *In search of Brac.*
Yes John Perkins..... *Overseer of Karl and Southen's business.*
B.W. Ransom Sage.... *A lawyer in search of an heir to Southen's property.*
Clarissa Avery..... *A country milliner.*
Dorcas Jones..... *A country dressmaker.*
Anna Blake..... *In Perkin's power.*



COSTUMES.

BRAC. *Act 1*—Plain gingham frock. *Act 2*—Dress of the same.
Act 3—Dress of fashionable young lady.
BOB. *Act 1*—Bicycle suit. *Act 2 and 3*—Street dress.
FRANK KARL. *Act 1 and 2*—Street dress. *Act 3*—Full dress.
JOHN PERKINS—(A heavy cloak for the murder) Full dress.
RANSOM SAGE. Street dress.
CLARISSA AVERY. Old fashioned silk dress.
DORCAS JONES. *Act 1*—Common woolen dress. *Act 2*—Old style silk.
ANNA BLAKE. *Act 2*—Street costume. *Act 3*—Stylish silk suit.



TIME OF PERFORMANCE—TWO HOURS.



STAGE DIRECTIONS.

R., means Right; L., Left; R. H., Right Hand; L. H., Left Hand; C., Centre; S. R., [2d E.,] Second Entrance; U. E., Upper Entrance; M. D., Middle Door; F., the Flat D. F., Door in Flat; R. C., Right of Centre; L. C., Left of Centre.

R. R. C. C. L. C. L.

•• The reader is supposed to be upon the stage facing the audience.



Any one desiring to produce this play is at liberty to do so free of charge.



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BRAC; THE POOR HOUSE GIRL.

ACT I.

SCENE—Set house L. 1 E., with front removed from the height of the bottom of the window, so that what transpires within the rooms can be seen from the audience. Room furnished to represent a parlor millinery establishment. In front and to the R. side of the set house is a vacant space, representing a garden which is surrounded by a neat garden fence; gate C. The front of the stage, from about the second wings, is vacant. Above the vacant side of the room is a sign "MISS CLARISSA AVERY, Fashionable Milliner." At the rise of the curtain MISS AVERY is discovered seated at C. of the room trimming a green plush hat.

Clarissa. (after pinning on a couple of sun flowers) What next, I wonder! to think of these homely flowers bein' the rage! I recollect ma wouldn't have one of 'em growin' in the front yard, even 'mong the genteel flowers, but had 'em out by the woodshed, 'cos they were called good for fever and ager. Now they tell me they use 'em at fust-class parties, and decorate grand rooms with 'em. Well, it's live and learn! (holds hat at arm's length) There now, Miss Priscilla Primrose, your bunnet's done! and I must say that it does my arteestic 'bility great credit in showin' so much style. (looks at the clock) Lor sakes! It's nine o'clock and I haven't made my toilet yet. What if any one had called! I must go at once.

(exit at side door)

Enter BRAC into garden in front of the house from the back part of the stage; comes with a run and jump.

Brac. Well, here I is, right side up again! I just falled down and hurt myself like fun. How good it is of Miss Avery to give me a home. I wish she'd give me more to eat; let me see. Yesterday I had some cold potatoes for breakfast, and for dinner I had—what did I have? Oh, I know! I had nothin', for she made me go without, to punish me for shearin' her pet cat. Ha! ha! ha! he did look awful comic though, and she called me an imp! I don't know what that is, but she says that they can't go to heaven. Well, I can't help it. I'm just as I growed; but I think she 'll have a fight to get through the golden gate. Oh, dear! I wish I was rich like Bob; then all the girls in town wouldn't make faces and call me names. I don't care, I don't like to be made fun of just bec'us—I'm

—DO—OR—

(sits on the seat in front of gate and cries

BRAC; THE POOR HOUSE GIRL.

Enter BOB from L. 1 E.

Bob. (discovers BRAC crying) Why, hallo, Brac! What's the trouble? What are you crying for? Come, don't mind it; now you just see what I've brought you—(takes bananas from his pocket) there!

Brac. What's them?

Bob. Those are bananas.

Brac. Bandanas?

Bob. No, not bandanas but bananas, and now I want you to eat every one of them.

Brac. What! all—of—them?

Bob. Yes, all of them.

Brac. At once?

Bob. No, not at once, but one at a time.

Brac. My stars! what a picnic!

Bob. Now go ahead and eat, and I'll watch and see that dear Clarissa don't see you.

Retires a little; BRAC is very slow about eating at first, as though afraid, but finally eats ravenously.

Bob. Heavens! she must be awful hungry! I thought she looked as though she was starved. Just see her eat, will you?

Brac. Oh, ain't these just 'licious!

Bob. Delicious, you mean, Brac.

Brac. Yes, I s'pose I do. (aside) I can never get the big words in right, somehow.

Bob. (sitting by her side) I say, Brac, I've a good mind to give your mistress a good sound bit of advice.

Brac. You'd better not, unless you're goin' to 'vise her how to regain the bloom of youth, and then she ain't the worst guard.

Bob. What makes you persist in calling her guard?

Brac. Bec'us she's been lookin' out of the door every mornin' and under the bed every night for fifty years, to find a husband; and if she ain't on guard—then all right!

Bob. That's rather strong proof, I must say. But, Brac, do you know the reason she never puts her purse in her pocket?

Brac. No, unless she's like me and ain't got any pocket. But that ain't it, for I see'd her take a pep'mint out the other day, and she didn't give me one neither. Tell me what's the reason, quick!

Bob. Because it is so light she is afraid that it will jump out.

Brac. Why, Bob, I didn't think you would make fun like that. But say! Miss Avery says that she never had a man kiss her.

Bob. I don't believe that.

Brac. But I do!

Bob. Why, Brac! what makes you believe that a lady could have grown up and not have been kissed?

Brac. 'Cause the men are all afraid of powder.

Bob. Well, Brac, I'm not!

Brac. Oh! he—he kissed me! (aside) and I ain't washed my face this week.

Bob. Well, Brac, there's going to be a party down to Avoca farm, and the gentlemen are all obliged to take ladies, so I wish to have you go with me.

Brac. Oh, Bob, I'd like to go so much! But—I—can't, be—be—

c'use I'm only Miss Avery's slavey and ain't wanted where all them fine folks are.

Bob. You can go with me if you will, and I should like to see any one say anything against you when I am around.

Brac. I thank you Bob, for your invite, but—I can't go, no how, and I—I must go in now, so good bye.

Bob. Forgive me, Brac, I did not mean to make you unhappy! Good bye! I'll go and have a good long ride now; for, after you, my bicycle is my best friend.

Brac. Bob! don't you look so serious or I'm afraid you'll take a header from your bicycle.

Bob. I'll be careful—good bye! *(exit BOB, L. 1 E.)*

Brac. Oh, why can't I dress and go like other girls? Here I have to stay day and night and work for my food and she manages to make my dresses out of her old ones. I only wish that she'd make me more than one at a time, so's I could kinder dress up and look a little bit prime when Bob comes. I do try and not be stupid when he's here, but I get so awful hungry that I don't care for nothin' or nobody. Lor, sakes! want them bandanas immense though? Now I'm goin' to take my books away before old guardy gets her eye on me.

(takes a book from under the seat and runs off at the right)

Enter CLARISSA into room from side door, dressed for the day.

C. There now, I'm ready! I owe it to my profession to make a good appearance, else how could the public trust my taste in bunnets. I got the latest style for doing up my hair from the best place in town, and had my dress bought in New York, so as to give it tone. And now I'll just look out—I always do every morning—so's to see if he's comin'. *(looks out of the door, slams it to, and comes back)* Oh, dear! I didn't see him anywhere! but he must come sometime I know, for I have a sort of presentiment. Now if I was to pick out a wedding outfit I'd have a pale pink brocade silk dress, with light green satin piping and black pass-a-commentry fringe, and for a hat I'd have the faintest, loveliest, creamiest plush—

BRAC bursts into the house from the door, and CLARISSA starts violently.

Brac. Oh, mum, the boys have been and went and gone and done it this time, they have!

C. Lor sakes, Brac! what do you come a bustin' into a room like a turnado in that 'ere way for? Don't you know what sensibilities and high strung nervous organizations is?

Brac. *(anxiously)* No, mum! Is it good to eat, mum?

C. *(vexed)* Good to eat! gracious goodness, girl! you'll drive me mad with your stupidity! What has them imps of Satan been up to now?

Brac. They've been alterin' the sign, mum.

C. Altering my sign! Well, I never! That comes of bein' a lone woman with no protector. Oh, why did I scorn all the suitors for my hand? I might have had my choice of them. *(brings in the sign, holds it up and reads it, and sets it beside the other; it reads: "Miss CLARISSA A-very cuss of a Fashionable Milliner.")* Stands off and looks at the sign) For the landsake! my best sign distroved!

and I'll be obliged to use the old one. Brac, come here! Do you know done this? No, of course you don't! How can I expect you to know anything? still it's a good time to learn you one thing, and that is, that the imp who did this job will git his deserts bye and bye, for the Good Book says that "the wages of sin is death."

Brac. When are you goin' to draw your salary, mum?

C. What's that? You ungrateful wretch! Didn't I give you some cold griddles for your breakfast this morning? but it's no use; the more I do for you, the sasier you git. Where have you hid yourself to all the morning?

Brac. Me hide myself—ha! ha! ha! I was out in the garden. and oh, almost everywhere.

C. I 'spected as much. You'll be a fust class tramp if you don't stop. Can't I teach you that "a rollin' stone gathers no moss!"

Brac. What's that? What do you mean by a rollin' stone?

C. Why, any pirson what's always movin' about from one place to another and from one business to another.

Brac. Then a fellow what stays still all the time the moss grows to.

C. That's the idea! That's what I've been teaching you.

Brac. You must be all covered over, for people say that you have been here for fifty years, mum.

C. Well, I d'clar! (*sharply*) you just march yourself about your work and don't you ever come to me with your impertinence again, you sasy brat, or I'll send you back to the poor farm.

Brac. (*aside*) Oh, ain't she just jolly mad, though?

Bursts out laughing and rushes out of the room at the door, leaving it open.

C. I don't see for the life of me what makes that child so stupid!

BRAC comes in and closes the door behind her.

Brac. Lor, mum! There's a real man at the door, and he wants to see you all—a—lone.

C. Good gracious, he's come at last! Now see that you are looking your best, Clarissa. (*primps before the glass*)

Brac. (*suddenly*) There's a hole in your dress, mum.

C. Good heavens! where? Where is it?

Brac. (*getting out of reach*) At the bottom, mum.

C. Oh, you imp! I almost fainted with shame.

Brac. Say, shall I ask him in, mum?

C. Well, I never! Of course you'll ask him in, stupid!

Brac. (*yells*) Come in, "stupid!"

C. Gracious heavens, girl, you are the biggest natural born fool I ever saw.

Exit BRAC and returns with MR. SAGE.

Brac. Here he is, mum. Mr. Stupid.

BRAC gets behind SAGE and goes through motions of the introduction.

Sage. Allow me!

(*presents his card*)

C. (*aside*) Mr. Sage! Well, that's not a bad name, though it does remind one of catnip and peneroyal.

Brac. (suddenly) Fire! Fire!!

C. (alarmed) Good gracious, child! where?

Sage. Where? where? (*advances and puts hand on BRAC's arm*)

Brac. No where, sir. I only see'd her commence to spark, and thought I'd give the alarm before she blazed. (*SAGE turns aside*)

C. (angrily) Oh, you—child! Go out of the house this minute.

BRAC starts for the door but stops, jumps up and screams.

Brac. Lor, mum! there's a mouse under your dress; he just runned there.

CLARISSA screams, and jumping up into a chair, holds her dress up to the top of her boots. SAGE advances hastily, looking for the mouse.

BRAC strikes an attitude and says:

Brac. There, she blazes!

Sage. (laughs) Well, you are enough to make anything blaze. (*assists C. to the floor*) Pray calm yourself, my dear madam, there's nothing to be feared from such a small animal, and he has gone long ere this. (*helps himself to chair near rear door*)

C. Why don't you leave the room as I told you, and don't you dare to come in here again unless you are called; do you hear? (*goes to BRAC; aside*) You shall go to bed without your supper for playin' that joke on me. You didn't see a mouse at all, you wretch!

BRAC has edged up behind MR. SAGE's chair, and pulling his hair and answering CLARISSA at same time.

Brac. Small loss, mum.

Sage. (*jumps up and exclaims*) Thunder! I don't know but it was a small loss, but a few of them would leave me bald-headed.

C. (*advancing and speaking softly*) Oh, what is the trouble, sir? Does your head ache? (*rubbing his head*)

Sage. No, it's nothing, only—er—She's a remarkably lively little girl, though.

C. Yes, she's altogether too lively. I just took her out of the poor farm, and am trying to make a pleasant home for her. (*aside*) I think that she lives too high.

Sage. Yes, I think that she is a little lively; but let me return to business. I—I'm from India.

C. Sho—!

SAGE takes chair up to table

Sage. A lawyer; this is my card.

(*drawing a chair up to table also*)

C. I want to know?

Sage. Yes, of course you want to know; well, I'm hunting for heirs.

C. Du tell?

Sage. Or heiresses!

C. For the land's sake!

Sage. Did you ever hear of a Luke Southen, who was rather a wild youth and went off to India?

C. Lor', yes—he was my second cousin on my mother's side; her name was Mandrake before—(*SAGE interrupts her and continues*)

Sage. Yes—yes, I know all about that. But Luke, poor fellow, has left this world forever.

BRAC; THE POOR HOUSE GIRL.

C. Goodness me! You don't mean it!

Sage. He turned over a new leaf when he got to India, and saved money.

C. He saved money! Du tell?

Sage. Yes, I will, if you will give me time. Well, he left about half a million to his next of kin. Now we found no will, and in looking up his family, we find that they have all passed away with the exceptions of a cousin by the same name you bear, though she is so far distant that it will be quite a task to get the property but it will in time naturally come to that person. Now if you are the same Clarissa, and it can be proved that you are the last and nearest—

C. (*hurriedly*) I am—I am! His folks are all gone long ago. God bless them! and I am the—

Sage. Exactly. I've been looking for you for a long time. (*rises*) Allow me to congratulate you on being— (*offers his hand*)

C. (*rises and takes his hand and holds it*) As the poet says—

“The last ungathered rose
Upon the parent stem.”

Sage. (*puts his other hand on her arm—they still holding hands*) Ah! certainly that is your fault, madam, or else there must be a singular insensibility in this community. You are out of your sphere here, madam. In the great metropolis, amid congenial minds, you should shine—

C. (*dropping his hand and walking back and forth with clasped hands*) I know it, sir. I have always felt that I was born for better things. (*stops suddenly in front of SAGE*) But how soon can I draw?

Sage. Draw?

C. Yes, draw checks to be sure!

Sage. Oh—ahem! Well, you know the law is very slow in its processes; you understand—delays, lots of red tape, and all that sort of thing. (*resumes his seat*)

C. And what sort of thing?

Sage. Why, delays and red tape, of course.

C. Sho! (*sits opposite SAGE*) Red tape! well, that's curious! But I don't want any tape. I can buy that any time; all I want is to draw checks.

Sage. But don't you understand? that instead of getting money at once, you'll have to pay out something; a mere trifle compared to the prize. You'll have to fee a lawyer to prove that you are yourself—that you are the last of the race.

C. Oh, if that's all, that's easy enough. Any one about here can give you my history. I suppose you will undertake the case?

Sage. With pleasure—I may say since I have seen you, with infinite pleasure, madam.

C. You do me a great favor in the interest you show in my behalf; and now you must remain with me—no excuses taken. So you can make yourself at home here, while I see about the dinner. (*goes to door and calls*) Brac! Brac, I say!

BRAC rushes into door.

Brac. Here I is!

C. You go to the hotel at once and get a chicken—

Brac. A—what?

C. A chicken, stupid!

Brac. A chicken stupid! what's that?

C. Oh, you—you'll drive me mad! You go and do as I tell you; get the chicken; tell Bunker I don't want any old fossil, but the finest he's got, and some early peas and salad—

Brac. Oh, my! she's crazy, sure!

C. Shut up, will you? and then order some ice cream from Crown's; mind, no dippin' into it! Now be a good girl and let me know the moment they come, and you shall have a nice dinner.

(*exit C. into room with SAGE, and BRAC out of street door*)

Enter KARL in front, R. 1 E.

Karl. So this is the place where the little one lives. I wonder how she's treated. They say up town that the old woman ain't very liberal. Let me see; it's nine months since poor Luke died; before he died we gave John, our overseer, the place and sufficient capital to carry it on, as he had always been honest as far as we knew; and then Luke gave me his will, and all the information that he possessed about his child, and told me to find her and see that she had her rights, which I promised to do. After we buried him I started at once as I didn't like the place after my partner's death. And John, well he drew his money and came by the same boat as I, and he was going to get his wife and mother, he said; but I guess that he thought he would settle up all of our property in his own way, the night he stabbed me in the back and threw me overboard; but the time hadn't come for old Karl to pass in his chips. So here I am and I'm bound to see the girl righted. Hallo! here comes some one down the road. I'll step aside, as I don't wish to be seen here! (*steps back in the shadow and as JOHN passes exclaims, aside*) What! Jack Perkins here! This means mischief! I must find out his object and plans.

JOHN enters L. E., looking all about the place.

John. Ah! here I am! (*looks in window*) What! no one at home, not even the old lady; that's rather funny! I thought that she was always in. Well, this will give me a chance to think and to lay my plans. I've already made the acquaintance of Brac, though she don't seem to fancy me. Now I have all the proofs with the exception of the key to that confounded locket and his will. I don't see how I missed finding them on Karl that night. I thought I felt in every pocket before I threw him over. (*KARL moves his position*) What's that! Somehow every time I think of that act I start as if I had been shot. I must be getting nervous, for every time I see a stranger, a kind of fear takes possession of me. Supposing Karl had escaped? No, that was impossible; and he carried the key and will down to the bottom of the sea with him. I was sorry to harm him, but he was too honest and stood in my way, so he had to go. Now he's gone, and having no relatives, leaving no will, when I get back to India I must get possession of his property, which will give me a cool million. But to settle this first; now I must try and marry this Brac and so get control of her money; or if failing to win her, she must disappear, and I will then be master of the situation. But the old woman is a relation of his, and if some one nearer is not found, she will get the prize. I hear that old Sage is

over here trying to discover the heirs. I have it now! If I fall with the girl, she's seen no more; and then I will make Anna come and take her place. (*looking off stage, right*) Hallo! Here comes Brac now!

Enter BRAC, R. 1 E.

John. Why, hallo, my little beauty! (*advancing to BRAC*)

Brac. (*surprised*) Good morning, Mr. Perkins.

John. You are as bright as a dollar and as pretty as a picture.

Brac. (*angrily*) Say! where'd you get 'em? (*chucks her under the chin*)

John. Where did I get what, Brac?

Brac. The spoons!

John. Brac, you're a prize for some man who wants a nice, smart, handsome little wife.

Brac. (*angrily*) Do you know what you are?

John. No. What am I?

Brac. (*spitefully*) You're an old gas bag.

John. Brac, why is it that you always avoid meeting me, and are always so formal to one who takes a great interest in you?

Brac. You take a great interest in me! Why, the sight of you makes me ugly. You don't have any interest in me—there is some other reason for your attentions.

John. (*aside*) Confound her tongue! I shall have to be careful how I act for she mistrusts me already. (*aloud*) I'm very sorry that you have this feeling towards me and if it is possible for me to do anything that will lead you to change your opinion, I beg of you to command me, for I have a greater regard for you than any other person I ever saw, and you know that I'm always lonesome when I'm away from you.

Puts his arm around her waist; she jumps aside and stands with fingers spread apart, ready to scratch.

Brac. Oh! what's crawlin' on you? (*JOHN takes a step forward*) Don't you come near me or I'll scratch your eyes out.

John. Come now, Brac, don't get mad, for it spoils the beauty of your face.

Brac. I won't, if you promise not to do that again.

John. I'll give you my word of honor.

Brac. That's not bang up 'security, but I'll risk it.

John. Brac, you're an angel!

Brac. (*looks up into his face, and says sarcastically*) Say, you ought to be in a sausage factory.

John. Why, what makes you think so, pet?

Brac. 'Cause you could furnish the stuffin' for nothing.

John. Brac, you are very rude to one who wants to be your best friend.

Brac. (*aside*) You may have it out in wanting for all I care. (*aloud*) Mr. Perkins, if I've said anything that I ought to be sorry for—I'm—glad of it!

John. I'll stop that tongue of yours when you are once in my hands, young lady. (*exit L. 1 E.*)

Brac. Now I'll get the things. I didn't like to bring them while he was here. Oh, how I hate that man! (*exit R. 1 E.*)

Karl. (comes forward) So that's your game, friend John! Well, we'll see who wins in the long run. And so my little girl hates him, and that's as I could wish it. Ah, here she comes; I want to have a good look at her, so I'll stop her. What! She sees me and has gone across the garden. Well, I shall have to wait until some other time. (exit L. 1 E.)

Enter BRAC into the house through the street door. Takes things from basket and places them on a waiter, calling them by name.

Brac. What ever's come over her? I never see'd such a spread, and don't it make my mouth water? Lor', wouldn't it be prime if she'd give me a lick of the gravy. Just look at that ice cream! Ain't it just scrumptious, though? (yells) Here they is, mum!

Enter C., takes waiter and looks at contents.

C. (turning around) Brac, you can go out for a while and when we get through I'll call you and give you your dinner.

(exit through door)

BRAC goes into front yard.

Brac. Oh, dear! I wish Bob would come now. Somehow I always kinder forget how hungry I is, and—and we do have such nice times together, singin' and dancin', (enter KARL and stands listening) and talkin' and walkin' and all that; but I wonder if I'll ever go to balls and parties and picnics, the same as he does; but I don't suppose I can, for he's ever so much more shined up than I am, and it always makes me feel kinder 'shamed of myself. Then he don't like to have me climb trees, nor fences; and oh, I scared him so t'other day! I told him I was goin' swimmin' with Tom and Charlie Mack. Ha! ha! ha! just as if I didn't know no better. And he won't let me ride his bicycle, but I will some day when he don't know it! No, I won't neither, for if he should find it out he'd get mad, and—and I—I don't want him to get mad at me, for he's the bestest friend I've got. I just wish I had lots of friends like he's got.

Karl. (coming forward) Won't you let me be a friend of yours, my little lady?

Brac. (aside) My! he—he called me a lady! (aloud) But I—I don't know you.

Karl. Come, give me your hand and say that you'll let old Karl be your friend, won't you?

BRAC goes up and places her hand in his with a slap.

Brac. Yes, sir! you may be my bestest friend, number two.

KARL stoops and kisses her forehead.

Karl. Bless you, my child! and to repay you for your trust, I'll be a father to you.

Brac. You'll be—my—father; oh, sir, don't make fun of me, for I—I never had a father, and—and I didn't think by your face, (looking up into his face) for you look so kind, that you would make fun of me.

Karl. Forgive me, little one; I did not intend to make sport of you. And as for your father, I knew him well, and he was one of the truest friends that I ever had.

Brac. Oh, sir, you know who my father is, and will you take me to him? But—

Enter JOHN, R. 1 E.

Karl. But what, my child?

Brac. What did you mean by sayin' that you'd be my father? (*anxiously*) Are you him?

John. (*aside*) Ah, there she is! Who's that with her? I must find out what he wants.

Karl. No, child, I'm sorry to say I'm not. But I knew him well; and since he's gone to join your mother, I'll take his place, if you'll only let me?

Brac. Gone—my father—and mother—both dead. Oh, sir! have I always got to be alone and live here? I shall die if I do.

John. (*aside*) So you know about this affair! (*shakes his fist at KARL*) and you will be her father, will you? Well, we'll see about that; but I think that you'll be of about as much service to her as the one in India, af'er to-night. (*exit L. 1 E.*)

Karl. Come, come, little one, don't cry any more; Bob and I will be your friends, and we'll see what we can do for you; so cheer up.

Enter C. to room, followed by SAGE, and goes to door.

C. (*calling*) Brac! B-r-a-c, I say! Brac!

Karl. Some one coming? I must not be seen.

(*retires*)

Brac. Comin', mum!

Karl. Brac, meet me here again as soon as you can, will you?

Brac. Yes, sir. Good bye!

BRAC goes to the house and enters just as SAGE is coming out, runs against and almost upsets him.

Sage. Good gracious, my corns! (*hastily*) I mean foot.

C. Oh, you imp! What do you mean by runnin' against folks, like you was a steam locomotion?

Brac. Oh, sir, I—I didn't mean nothin'!

Sage. That's all right, my dear! never mind about it. And now Clarissa—

BRAC drops dish she has in her hands and looks astonished.

Brac. (*aside*) Why, he called her by her front name!

Sage. I've the honor of wishing you a very good morning. Let me say that we'll commence the case just as soon as you feel so disposed.

C. You are too kind, Ransom, and I can never repay you for the obligations that you heap upon me. I will attend to the matter at once.

Sage. Good morning, madam

(*exit off R*)

C. Good mornin', sir.

C. turns and sees BRAC standing over tray.

C. You just march yourself away from there, do you hear? *(takes tray and puts it in next room and brings back the back bone of a fish and gives to BRAC)* There, now! you've been a good girl, and I don't mind rewardin' ye. Don't go a gorgin' yourself and gettin' sick; there's nothin' so disgustin' as greediness.

Brac. Du tell?

(BRAC eats what little there is left)

C. Yes, I was goin' to; I'm goin' to live in the best hotel in the place.

Brac. Lor' mum!

(on the bone of the fish)

C. And you shall go and live with me and be my little maid.

Brac. Made of what, mum?

C. Lady's maid, child! to dress me and do up my hair.

Brac. Do your hair? I thought they stayed done when you bought 'em, unum?

C. What are you talkin' about? What do you know about my hair?

Brac. I know it always do look beautiful and just the same, whether it's on your head or hangin' on the back of the chair.

C. You saucy brat! but you shall wait on me and run my errands, if you are not too stupid.

Brac. Sho!

C. And now I'm goin' over to call on Miss Dorcas Jones and see if I can get her to buy my stock and business.

(putting on bonnet and shawl)

Brac. For the land's sake!

C. So you pick up the things and have everything in good order, for I'm going to try and bring her to terms.

(exit off R.)

Brac. Well, I never!

(BRAC comes out front of stage, and KARL joins her)

Karl. Brac, is that your aunt?

Brac. Her? No, she's my guard. But how did you find out my name? I never told you.

Karl. Why, didn't I hear her call you just now?

Brac. She did holler for me, didn't she? But what's your name?

Karl. Didn't I ask you to let old Karl be your friend?

Brac. Oh, yes! and I'm to call you Mr. Karl—Mr. Karl and Bob, and Bob and Mr. Karl.

Karl. Who is this Bob you have so much to say about?

Brac. Oh, he's—he's—he's real nice and kind and—and just like you, only he don't ask questions like you.

Karl. Well! well! I won't ask any more questions that will bother you, if you will agree to introduce me to him.

Brac. Lor' sakes! I'll do that in a minute, and I know you'll like each other, for he's so good and clean and—and you can't help liking him.

Karl. No, I suppose not. But, Brac, I must be going; but I have something to tell you of great value to you and you must not forget anything that I say. Have you a silver chain around your neck, fastened by a little locket?

Brac. Yes, sir!

Karl. Let me see it.

(she show chain; he produces key and unlocks the locket and relocks it)

again). It is the one and we are safe; now, don't you ever show that to any one else, or say that you have such a chain, if any one should ask, will you?

Brac. No, sir, but—

Karl. Don't ask any questions, but listen, for I have not got time to explain it all to you now. I may not see you again for some time, but promise me that you will hold no conversation whatever with any one in private.

Brac. (confused) What! not even Bob?

Karl. Yes, you may talk with Bob all you like, but no one else; and don't ever go away from the house with any one else except Bob or myself, unless some one brings you this key; and when any one shows you this, and asks you to go with them, be sure and go; and now, one thing more—don't ever stay in the house alone, do you promise?

Brac. Yes, sir, but—but why?

Karl. If you wish to find out about your father and mother don't forget what I have told you; and now, as I see your aunt coming, you had better go in; so good bye, little one!

(*exit B. 1 E.*)

Brac. Good bye, Mr. Karl.

(*exit through gate C. and around the house*)

Enter C. and DORCAS into room.

C. There, I told you it wasn't goin' to rain, you see its all clearin' up!

Dorcas. Yes, and I suppose that the business that you want to sell me wants clearin' up, too?

C. Yes, mum! You'll find ever' thing in fust class shape, and—oh, Dorcas, his voice haunts me still!

Dorcas. I dare say it does. If a fellow had come to tell me about half a million, his voice would haunt me for a long time.

C. But I mean there seems to be a something—a sympathetic chord—what do you call it?—a vibration in the heart.

Dorcas. Oh, I suppose like that funny bone in the elbow; I've had more experience in such matters, and I tell you, it's love.

C. Yes, I suppose so. (*sighs*) I'm a woman and it must come sometime.

Dorcas. Well, it's taken plenty of time to come. But, good gracious! there's half-million to comfort you.

C. Yes, that's so! But as I was sayin', I thought that you might like to join the business—dressmakin' and millinery goes together so well, you know. I'll sell out cheap, for I want the money to carry on my ease.

Dorcas. Oh, he isn't goin' to do it for love, then?

C. I couldn't scarcely ask that on so short acquaintance. So, if you like to take the business out and out, we won't haggle about the terms, and you can get a milliner from the city to help you. The people will miss the character and poetry I put into my bunnets, but I must carry my talents to another sphere. I think of buying an old ancestral place that's been handed down, you know. I can see myself treadin' the marble halls—

Dorcas. Look out for rhumatiz! You're sure it's all right, or you wouldn't want to sell. Well, I've been wantin' to enlarge my business and as I've got a few hundred saved up—of course you'll sigd papers not to open again.

C. Open! Dorcas Jones, why should the lucky possessor of half a million wish to open a millinery shop?

Dorcas. Oh, I don't know. Riches take wing, you know.

C. Yes, but I shall take wings with my riches. What do you say to five hundred dollars for my business.

Dorcas. Five hundred! Hum, I'll give you one-fifty for it.

C. I'll take it, Dorcas! and I'll agree to buy my bunnets of you in the bargain.

Dorcas. Well, then, supposin' we go over to Square Smart's and have everything fixed up.

C. That's the idea! Dorcas, I always told people that you had a wonderfully level head about business; but, Lor' me, how dark its grown. My sakes, if we ain't goin' to have a turnado then I ain't a foot high! *(thunders)*

Dorcas. Gracious me, how I wish I was home. Clarissa, have you got any feathers? if so, do let me get between them or I know I shall be killed. *(thunders and lightens)*

C. Oh, Lord! Come quick, Dorcas! Oh, my sensibilities! Oh, Dorcas, if we don't get on the bed before another flash, I shall become frustrated right here on the floor. *(exit in haste at side door)*

SCENE II—Roadside or street. Enter JOHN, R. 1 E., with cloak and wide hat. Heavy storm—stage dark.

John. This shower is coming along just in time. I must silence this intruder. I wonder who he can be? What! Some one coming! *(steps aside)*

Enter KARL R. 1 E. JOHN advances and hits KARL with butt of revolver and as he falls stabs him; this is followed by a vivid flash of lightning and very heavy crash of thunder. JOHN starts as if struck, and trembles violently; takes bottle from pocket and drinks.

John. My God! What a crash that was! I thought the whole forest was crashing down about my head. I must get away from here, but—I wonder if he has any papers that I might want. I'll see *(looks around and then searches him; a bicycle whistle is heard)* Confound it! am I to be driven off before—*(whistle again)* Curse their bicycles! *(exit in haste R. 1 E.)*

Enter BOB on bicycle R. 1 E., whistles as he comes on; sees KARL and dismounts.

Bob. Here's some poor fellow that has been struck down by the storm. Hallo! he's—he's been murdered! *(discovers he still lives and tries to wake him)* Why—Thank God! he still lives.

Produces flask and turns some down KARL's throat; KARL groans and turns: BOB gives more brandy and KARL opens his eyes, rises up and looks about, then sinks back.

Karl. Who are you? Where am I? What has happened? Oh, I remember; John struck me again. I saw his face by a flash of lightning.

Bob. There, there, sir! be quiet and I'll run and get help and take you home.

Karl. No—no—wait a minute and I'll go along with you. But—you haven't told me who you are?

Bob. I am Robert Wilder, commonly called Bob. I was riding home on my bicycle and saw you and thought that you had been hurt by the storm, and so dismounted to see if I could be of any assistance; I never dreamed of its being a case of attempted murder.

Karl. Bob—Bob—I remember now; do you know Brac?

Bob. Know Brac! Well, I should say that I did; why, she is such an innocent little thing that any one can get acquainted with her; and then, she's as smart as a steel trap, and is so ambitious to learn. It's a pity that she can't be sent to school; and she don't get half enough to eat. I just wish that I was of age and I'd take her away from that keeper of hers and send her to school. I tell you what it is, I think more of Brac than I do of my bicycle. But I forgot you, sir. Can I do anything for you?

Karl. Yes, you can help me get upon my feet, and then I'll go to the nearest house.

Bob. I'm afraid you will hurt yourself, sir.

Karl. Not at all, my friend Bob, I'm all right now. Come along, sir. This is not the end of this matter.

End of Act First.

CURTAIN.

ACT II.

SCENE—The lawn in front of Avoca Farm, containing trees, rustic seats, etc., etc. Enter John, R. 1 E.

John. So old Sage has taken up the case for the ancient relative, and he seems to be quite interested in the personal affairs of his client. Now, if I let him go on until he is so far in his own trap that he'll have to marry this Clarissa of his, I shall at least have done one good deed, and he is rich enough to make her comfortable even after I take away Luke's fortune, and so I'll keep the case standing, while I must try and win Brac's love, or else—ah, here she comes now!

Enter BRAC, L. 1 E., sees JOHN and turns to go back.

John. Ah, Brac, you are just in time. I've been trying ever since you came here, to see you.

Brac. You've seen me three times a day for the last three weeks.

John. Yes, I know, but I wanted to see you alone. Do you know you've improved wonderfully since you came here?

Brac. (aside) More taffy! (aloud) And do you know you grow more like a bumble-bee every day?

John. You say that because I'm always flying after you?

Brac. No, but because you are a hum-bug.

John. Brac, what can I say or do that will make you think more of me?

Brac. I guess that you'd have to stand in front of me all the time and then I'd forget.

John. And I never forget you. If you only knew of all the anxious hours I pass when away from your society, if you knew of the depth of my regard for you, you would at least pity and spare me from being the object of your ridicule.

Brac. (*aside*) He was his muzzer's own boy, so he was. (*aloud*) I'm awful sorry for you, but I'll tell you what to do!

John. Well, what is it, pet? (*advances toward her*)

Brac. Go and take some paregoric.

John. But you don't understand me—

Brac. (*aside*) No, nor I don't mean to, either!

John. I do not suffer from any physical illness—

Brac. (*aside*) I should judge not by the way you eat.

John. Mine is a mental sickness.

Brac. My! what a surprise that must be to your head.

John. I am afraid your love of fun will lose you many friends if you don't look out, for you are very rude at times. But, Brac, I want to ask your advice about a very import matter.

Brac. It's very important that you should have my advice too, I suppose?

John. Yes, decidedly so!

Brac. Well, you shall have it, only don't get mad if I happen to speak too plain.

Enter BOB, R., sees them, stops and listens.

John. Now, Brac, I'm in love—

Brac. Oh, sho! that's nothing new to you!

John. Yes it is, though, for I'm really in love this time, with the best little woman in the world. She is very poor and as proud as she is poor, while she knows that I am rich and can give her everything that would make a fine lady of her, yet I would gladly give away my wealth and work for her, if she would only try and learn to love me. This is my story, Brac; what would you advise me to do? I don't know just how to tell her, for she is so shy and proud that it is with great difficulty that I ever see her at all, and then she always puts a stop to my conversation whenever I commence to speak of her. Now, how shall I manage to tell her?

Brac. And that's why you never smile or look happy; now I'm real ashamed of the way I have treated you, but I—I thought that you was awful cross and—and you always looked at me so strange like, that you made me afraid of you, but I'm awful sorry now.

John. Thank you, Brac, I knew that you had a kind and honest heart; but you are not afraid of me now, are you?

(*comes up and takes her hand; she draws it away and steps back*)

Brac. I—I don't know; but my advice—I must give you that—(*speaks very slow*) Well, Mr. Perkins, if I was in your place, the very next time that I saw her I would tell her that I loved her and then ask her—No, I wouldn't! I'd tell her the story just as you've told me and then ask her for advice and then—

John. And then what, Brac?

Brac. But you haven't told me what she looks like, yet?

John. And would you like to know?

Brac. Oh, ever so much! for I never heard a real love story before.

John. Well, then, listen! *(gives description of BRAC)*

Brac. Why, that's almost me!

John. Yes, Brac, it is you! and I want you to be mine, will you, darling?

Puts his arm around her and stoops to kiss her. She jumps away and slaps his face.

Brac. Sir, if I am poor, I know what's honorable, and I'd sooner starve than live with you.

John. Beware, young lady, or you may have a chance to do as you say, for if something should be missed from the house and found on you, you would lose your place, and then who would have a thief in their house; mind I don't say that this will happen, nor do I mean to reflect on your honesty.

Brac. My honesty has as yet never been questioned; and as for your threats I don't care that for them *(snaps her fingers)* or you either.

John. Have a care! you are getting too high; you'll fall before long.

Brac. You'll never be troubled that way, for you are so low that you can't fall.

Exit JOHN, L., in a rage. BOB comes forward.

Bob. You had him that time, Brac.

Brac. Oh, Bob! did you hear him?

Bob. Yes, Brac, I heard all, for you know that I promised Mr. Karl not to lose sight of you while he was away.

Brac. And I promised not to talk to any one but you and—and I forgot all about it. Oh, what will he think?

Bob. You promised not to talk in private, and you did not for I was here and heard all that was said, and I came very near knocking that man down before he got through. Brac, I'm so glad that you—you refused him.

BRAC sits on rustic bench; BOB sits beside her.

Brac. And so be I, and—ain't you getting too near?

BOB moves up and puts his arm around her.

Bob. Brac, do you know I'm—I—I wonder where Mr. Karl is?

Brac. I don't know, but—say, ain't you afraid—of—of—

Bob. Of that Perkins? No, I'm not.

Brac. No, I mean—ain't you afraid of—haven't you grown afraid of—of powder?

Bob. (aside) My stars, that's a straight one! *(kisses her; aloud)* Do you think that I have?

Brac. A—little!

Bob. Well, I won't be again. But, Brac, did you know that I was going away?

Brac. You going away? Why, what for?

Bob. I must go back to school for another year, and—I want you to be sure and—remember me, won't you?

Brac. Oh, why must you go away so soon? First Mr. Karl goes away without even saying good bye, then I have to lose you.

Bob. Do you think that you will miss me very much, Brac?

Brac. Yes, lots; and—I shall be awful lonesome when you are gone.

Bob. I shall miss you very much for I've been learning to love you more and more ever since I first saw you.

Brac. In love with me! you?

Bob. Yes, in love with you, Brac. But I can't offer you a fortune, for I am not wealthy.

Brac. You love me!—sure?—no joking?

Bob. Yes, I'm sure, and no joking.

Brac. Well, then, you can have me, for I—I love you! (*draws herself slowly away from him*) But, Bob, this can never be! You are too far above me for you to think of ever making me your wife, for I am not educated enough to go with the same people that you do, and—and I couldn't bear to see you ashamed of me.

Bob. But I'll send you some books so you can learn; and you must write and let me know how you are getting along, will you?

Brac. Yes.

Bob. Now, good bye.

(*they embrace*)

Enter C. and SAGE, R.

C. What—what does this mean?

BRAC and BOB go to opposite sides of stage.

Brac. I—I—don't know, mum.

Bob. It means—that—that I was—was only showing Brac how to teach a dog arithmetic.

C. (*aside*) I wish Ransom would be my teacher.

Sage. Ha! ha! ha! Well, that's good! And how do you do it?

Bob. Why, you just tie up one of his paws, and he'll put down three and carry one, every time.

C. Lor' sakes!

Sage. Young man, you've got quite a start in the world, but don't try to go too fast; take it easy and you'll come out all right in time. Just look at me, now I'm a self-made man.

Brac. If I had done the job I'd have put more hair on your head.

C. Stop your noise, you imp! Don't you have any respect for no one? (BRAC and BOB walk to and fro at rear of stage) Dear Ransom, you must not mind them; they are young and foolish, and must have their jokes.

Sage. My dear Clarissa, I don't mind them in the least, and if I did, how could I so far forget your charming presence. Believe me, this is the happiest moment of my life.

C. Oh, and the cruelty of the fates to have kept us apart for so many years, when we was born for each other; as the poet says:

“Two souls with but a single thought,
Two hearts that beat as one.”

Sage. But I seem to have known you all my life, and after we get this law business settled, I know where to find a very appropriate companion to journey through the walks of life with me.

C. (*aside*) That's just like poetry! He's so poetical! (*aloud*) And how is the case coming out? I wish that it was all settled now.

Sage. Well, you know that I had the thing almost settled day before yesterday, when in comes another lawyer with a dispatch

from India, saying that there had been some important facts discovered in regard to the case, and so he got it laid over until he could go to India and collect his proofs and so on; and as the case cannot be called without him, we shall have to let it hang for a time. So I thought that I'd run down and inform you of the facts, and also enjoy the pleasure of your charming companionship.

C. You are very, very thoughtful of me. But you must be quite famished, for you have not had any dinner yet. Brac, what time is it?

Bob. It's just twelve, madam.

C. Only twelve! why, I thought it must be more than that.

Brac. It's never more, mum, it just begins at one again.

C. For the land sake! You are gettin' so smart of late, that there's no tellin' where you'll stop.

Sage. Never mind, my dear; you know the old saying that "boys will be boys," and why should not "girls be girls."

SAGE and C. exit L., talking.

Brac. That makes twice to-day that she has almost complimented me.

Bob. Why, how was that?

Brac. She just said that I was "so smart," and this morning she almost called me honey.

Bob. Almost?

Brac. Yes, she said, "come, now, beeswax, fly around."

Bob. Rather doubtful compliments, I should think. But I believe that you told me that she had taken up painting. How does it agree with her?

Brac. I don't think it is very healthy, for it makes her awful red in the face.

(bell rings)

Bob. Hallo! there's the dinner bell, and we must start or we'll be late.

(exit both to house)

Enter JOHN, R.

John. No one here! good! I must have that Brace disgraced, branded as a thief and sent away, for I can never make her think that I love her; then after she leaves, I'll find her and persuade her to enter a convent. Once there I need have no more fear of her; but in case she should refuse to enter that haven of rest, I know a sure way to stop her tongue. I was extremely fortunate in finding her asleep the other day, and with the aid of a little ether, I obtained an impression of that locket and chain which has been a draw-back for so long. I never dared ask her for it, and she never wore it in sight; but I have it at last, and now for a chance to hide my ring in her room and then, the crime once fastened on her, she can't escape me.

(exit L.)

Enter BRAC from house.

Brac. A letter for me! I wonder who it's from? Oh, it's from Mr. Karl, and he says:—"Dear Brac, (that's me) I shall come to Avoca Farm to-night and want to see you alone. Don't let any one see this letter and don't tell any one that you are coming to see me, not even Bob. I send you the key so that you may know that this comes from me. Now don't fail to be on the lawn in front of the

house at ten o'clock, sharp, to-night, as I must see you at once. Remember, at ten to-night. Yours truly, FRANK KARL." What a funny man he is! I don't know as its proper for me to come out to see a man so late, but I'm comin' and I'll take that revolver gun Bob gave me and if it's any one else but Mr. Karl, I'll shoot—

Enter BOB from house.

Bob. Who's that you are going to shoot, Brac?

Brac. No one—I—I was only saying a piece that I learned.

Bob. Why, Brac, where did you get that letter?

Brac. I—I had it sent to me by—

Bob. By who? by that clodhopper of a farmer?

Brac. No, not by him; it was sent by—oh, Bob, I can't tell you now; you must wait until tomorrow.

Bob. No, I can't! I won't wait! let me see who it's from.

Brac. Bob, you have no right to speak to me like that, if you are my friend. *(exit into house)*

Bob. Brac, I—I didn't mean it! Oh, what a fool I've been.

Enter JOHN, R.

John. And always will be as long as you let that girl control you.

Bob. Sir! I don't know what right you have to interfere with my affairs; and as for that young lady, I won't hear a word against her from you or any one else.

John. Oh, as you please! Only don't be surprised to see your idol fall to the ground some day.

Bob. What do you mean? Have a care, sir, or I shall be tempted to thrash you, you sneak!

John. What! you thrash me? Ha! ha! ha! Well, that's good! But let me advise you to beware how you call names, or I may do what you threaten.

Bob. I should like to have you attempt it, sir! I'm not afraid of you, and as for names, I say to your face that you are a coward. Good day,—sir! *(bows and walks off slowly, L.)*

John. Curse his impudence! Ah, here comes Anna! How lucky he left in just the nick of time; now to give her some information as to the part that she must take.

It grows dark as night is approaching. Enter ANNA, R.

John. You are on time, I see, Anna. *(looks at watch)*

Anna. That's more than I can ever say of you.

John. We have no time to talk over old stories, so if you'll listen I'll tell you why I sent for you.

Anna. Very well!

John. You seem highly interested and if you display as much zeal in the pursuit of this object, we will undoubtedly have excellent success. But the reason I sent for you is this. There was a large fortune left by a friend of mine in India, to his wife and child in this country, and as they are both dead, I propose to get possession of this property.

Anna. And what has all this to do with me?

John. Everything, if you wish to become independently rich,

and will do as I wish; now I want you to be this girl and to claim this fortune.

Anna. And how am I to accomplish this?

John. Why, you were left an orphan and was adopted and educated by some kind people who have lately died, and it was shortly after their death that I discovered you and brought you here, and put your claims in the courts for you.

Anna. And why go to court about it if I am the only heir?

John. I am glad to see you display so much interest at last. *(gives her a letter and package)* Here is a letter that will explain all, besides giving you what instructions you may require; and as regards the key to the chain, that, of course, must be returned to me.

Anna. What am I to receive for all the trouble and risk I run?

John. One-half the fortune, and the love of your humble servant.

Anna. Bah! *(snaps her fingers)* that for your love! I've tried it too often to have any faith in it.

John. Come, now, Anna, you must not quarrel with your dear old Jack—

Anna. That's enough of that! I'll agree to do this if you are sure that the rightful heirs are dead, not from any love for you, but because it promises to give me wealth; and if one-half of this fortune is not left entirely with me—I'll destroy it wholly, as far as you are concerned—do you hear?

John. Have a care, woman, I'm not to be crossed in this matter!

Anna. John Perkins, you are not dealing with the little innocent girl you betrayed four years ago, but with one who knows you, and how to take care of herself, and does not fear you in the least, coward that you are. Now, if you have anything further to say in regard to the plans, I will hear you.

John. Nothing, except that you must let me know where to find you at any moment.

Anna. And you must keep me informed as to the progress of the affair, and we'll get this fortune, if you have told me the truth about the matter; for I shall have it looked up and if you have lied, it will be a sorry day's work for you when you took me into your secret.

John. Can you doubt me?

Anna. Have I ever had any reason to believe you, you traitor?

(exit ANNA, R.)

John. Curse her! what a tiger she's got to be; I'll tame her, before I get through with her—and now for Brac, she must go at once. *(looks at watch)* Why, it's most ten o'clock and as I've put in quite a good day's work, I'll retire to the house, there to arrange for getting rid of Brac—the last of these obstacles. I did not know it was so late or I would have accompanied Anna to her destination.

(exit into house)

Enter KARL, R.

Karl. I wonder who that woman was that I surprised watching the house and muttering to herself; all that I could hear was, "Will you! we'll see who'll do the taming." Well, it was some poor domestic that has been discharged probably. It must be most ten by this time. I wonder if Brac has faith enough in me to keep the appointment; if she don't, I shall have to take Bob into my confidence. *(clock strikes ten)* There's the hour, and no—ah, here she comes. This way, Brac.

Brac. Oh, Mr. Karl! I'm so glad to see you! But why didn't you come earlier?

Karl. Because I could not; and now I must tell you why I am here. There is an enemy of yours in this house and he is about to do you a great injury, and the only way that you will escape it is to leave here.

Brac. An enemy to me! Why, I never did any one any wrong that would make them hate me, and I can't leave here for I have no place to go and no friends. I shall starve— *(falls on seat)*

Karl. Brac, I will be your friend. I want you to leave here and go with me. I have already made arrangements at a boarding school for your education, and as I have money enough and have no one to look out for, I am going to take you in charge for a while. Now, if you want to go school and have everything that you want, all you have got to do is to go in and get your hat and come along.

Brac. Oh, how kind of you; but you must ask my guard.

Karl. No, Brac, for I have not got the time, and besides she has no right to be consulted about this. Now hurry up, for my team is waiting for us.

Brac. Well, I'll run in and say good bye, and—

Karl. No, you must not let a soul know that you are going, nor must you let them know where you are.

Brac. Not—not even—Bob?

Karl. No, not Bob—yes, you may write Bob after you have been away for two weeks, but he must not tell any one else where you are; now take this *(gives letter)* and go to your room and copy it, and then take your hat and come out; go as quietly and quickly as possible, while I go and get the team. *(exit R.)*

Brac. *(going to house and turns at door)* I wonder if I'm doing right; but he's so honest that I know he won't harm me, and then it'll be such a surprise to my enemy and my guard, to wake up and find me gone; and then I'm to go to school and have all the dresses and money I want, and I'll study ever so hard so's to be like Bob. Yes, I'll go! *(exit BRAC into house)*

Enter KARL, R.

Karl. So far, so good! I had an easier time getting her to go than I expected, but I think that I should have taken her anyway, for I am getting afraid of that John; it's about time he tried something else besides love to get that money. Hallo, here she is now! Are you all ready, little one?

Brac. Yes, sir. *(KARL leads her off; she turns)* Good bye, Bob! Good bye, everybody! *(exit both, to the right)*

Scene changes to early morning. Enter SAGE from left.

Sage. What a lovely morning! Oh, what a vast difference one finds between the mornings in a city and in a place like this, where all the beauties of nature are temptingly displayed to the eye. If I were an artist that I would transfer the scene to canvas.

C. rushes from house with letter in her hand.

C. Oh, Ransom, catch me, I—I faint! *(falls in his arms)*

Sage. Oh, thou fairest of all flowers! it is with extreme joy that I embrace thee again. She grows heavy! *(places her on a seat)*

Now let the gentle zephyrs and the pearly dews restore thee to thine own animated self again. *(lights cigar)*

C. Oh, Ransom! what shall I do?

Sage. Whatever you do, my variegated pink, don't faint this way again.

C. Oh, my sensibilities and high strung nervous organization are completely earthquaked. Read this *(gives letter)* and know the cause of my commotion.

Sage. *(aside)* I'd rather not if it's contagious. *(reads letter aloud)* "Dear Guard: You will be surprised not to find me this morning, but I am tired of this kind of life, and am going away. I thank you for all you have done for me, and hope some day to see you again and to thank you myself. Say good bye to all, for me, your slavey, BRAC." Well, if that isn't spunk, then I'm a fool!

SAGE lays the letter beside C.

C. The ungrateful little thing, to leave me in this way! I dare say she has run away with some young chap.

Sage. Well, my dear, it's no use crying or scolding, for either one wont bring her back; if you want to find her, the best way is to tell the people and have her searched for.

Enter BOB and JOHN, R.

C. I'm not going searching for her; all there is, if she didn't like my ways and has runned away, let her; like as not she'll bring up in the poor house, where I took her from. I'm sure if she's lost, it's not my fault.

Bob. Who's lost?

Sage. Why, that poor little Brac has taken it into her head to run away.

John. Are you sure? *(turns to C.)* Which way did she go?

C. You don't suppose I know, do you? I don't set up all night and watch my maid, to see that she don't run away.

Bob. But didn't she leave any word—or anything?

C. Yes, there's the letter! *(pushing it towards hm)*

Bob. Good heavens—a letter!

C. Yes, a letter, and you are welcome to all the information that you can get from it; I suppose that you'll try to find her?

Bob. I shall do all that I can. *(BOB takes the letter)*

Sage. That's right, young man, and if I was not obliged to return to the city this morning, I'd help you in your search, but when you find her let me know, and we'll see what can be done for her. I think some folks might be more interested! *(exit R)*

C. Oh, he's going away without saying anything. Oh, Ransom! *(exit after SAGE)*

John. Mr. Wilder, let me offer you my assistance in finding the young lady.

Bob. Excuse me, but I prefer to act alone in this matter.

John. As you please; but will you allow me to read that letter?

Bob. Why, certainly! *(gives letter which JOHN reads; BOB walks side and stands alone at L.; aside)* And this is the letter Brac would not let me read yesterday. Perhaps if I had not been such a fool and so hasty, she might have told me where she was going; but I shall find her!

John. Thank you, sir! and let me say that if you are the first to discover her whereabouts—for I am going to do what I can to discover her—if you will accept of a favor, I can place her in a very fine family.

Bob. Very kind, I am sure! but once she is found, I also know of a home she can have without any trouble. (*JOHN bows and exit L.*) How I dislike that man! and still he appears to be a gentleman, and only for that little quarrel the other day, we might have been friends. But now to find Brac! (*exit L.*)

Enter C. from R.

C. Oh, the cruelty of these men! I never thought that Ransom could get provoked at his little pussy willsy woolsy. Oh, I shall prepire; I know I shall! (*takes seat and covers face with hands*)

Enter DORCAS from L.

Dorcas. Why, Clarissa, what on earths a troubling you? I heard down town as how Brac had gone.

C. Yes, she run away after I'd been to all the expense of fixin' her up so as she'd look kinder decent, for my maid.

Dorcas. Well, I wouldn't worry myself about it, though folks do say as how you was too hard on the girl; but I tell 'em that she was a regular scamp and couldn't be kept nowhere.

C. Thank you, Dorcas, you always did know me better than anybody else. She was an awful trial to me.

Dorcas. But how is your case coming out? It must be a costing you a pile of money by this time?

C. Yes, it's gettin' pretty expensive, but then it's nothin' to the prize.

Dorcas. No, I suppose not! and have you decided on the day yet?

C. No, he don't seem to come to the point, my dear; and somehow I can't seem to get him up to it. He shies every time. How is it done, Dorcas? You ought to know, betn' older.

Dorcas. (aside) Older, ahem! (*aloud*) Well, mine didn't need any managing, but you might say something of goin' to Europe. You are thinking of that, you know.

C. On a bridal tower! Oh, I thank you so much, Dorcas, and now you must come into the parlor and have a cup of tea while I show you dear Ransom's picture. (*exit both to house*)

Enter JOHN from L.

John. And so she's found at last! Here I've been wiring the country and had two detectives at work for the last two weeks, and all to no purpose, for it now turns out that she was murdered by some one and left in the woods. It was almost impossible to recognize her, and the chain was gone, yet I am convinced that she will not trouble again, and I am much obliged to the man who unknowingly has placed this fortune in my hands. Now, if Anna is all prepared, we will settle this business at the next session of the court and then I'll say farewell to this country, for I don't like the way things went about that stranger that promised to be Brac's father; his body was never found and there was never a report of

BRAC; THE POOR HOUSE GIRL.

any kind about the affair—it looks ugly, for whoever he was he called my name just as I struck him. I must be quick about this and be off before it is too late. (exit B.

Enter BOB, L.

Bob. A letter for me and in a strange hand writing! I wonder who its from. What, Brac! thank heaven, she's alive!—"Dear Bob: I must write you and let you know that I'm alive and well. Mr. Karl came after me that night and took me away and placed me in this school, and I have such a nice time and all the money and dresses and everything that I want. The girls and teachers are all very kind, and I'm studying real hard and trying to learn so that you won't be ashamed of me when we meet again. Mr. Karl has taken me in charge, and he says that I may write to you if you won't tell any one that you know where I am, for he don't want any one but you to know on any account; and now, good bye, Yours as ever, BRAC.

P. S. Write soon and address, BRACELL SOUTHEN, Bijou College. BROWNVILLE, New Jersey."

Bob. Found at last! I knew that was not her, although everybody believed it to be her body. Well, now that I know she is safe and in such excellent hands, I'll go back to school myself, for I am now two weeks late— It's rather hard to say good bye to all of these familiar scenes, but the best of friends have to part. (exit L.

End of Act Second.

CURTAIN.

ACT III.

SCENE—Reception room of Avoca Farm, nicely furnished, with entrance at back. SAGE discovered seated in chair, looking at his watch.

Sage. Eight o'clock! and in half an hour I shall be through with this case, which has now been at a stand still for one and a half years. I sent them all word that I would be ready to receive them at half past eight. It is very lucky for me that I never made any remark that Clarissa could make anything of; I have managed to keep within bounds all the time, although I did think that she would get me sometimes in spite of myself.

Enter CLARISSA, R.

C. I was so anxious I could not stay away.

Sage. I'm afraid that you've gained nothing by coming so soon. The other party will not be here until half past eight. I mentioned the half hour, I believe?

C. You did, but I had not seen you for so long, and I did so long to hear your voice once more.

Sage. Yes, I know! but it is time they were here.

(looks at watch

C. Who were here?

Sage. Why, the other claimaint! An enterprising young fellow has been at work, while I have been wasting my time on the wrong scent.

C. Good gracious! what do you mean? and aint I—aint you the—

Sage. No, you aint and I aint either, if you choose to put it that way. The party has proofs that are all right.

C. Oh, my sensibilities! I shall faint! *(looks at SAGE)*

Sage. You had better find an easy place to fall on before you try.

C. How cruelly unkind you have grown. But who is the—

Sage. Ah, here they are now!

Enter JOHN and ANNA, R.

C. Sakes alive! if it aint Mr. Perkins and that air higherluten gall!

SAGE and JOHN bow—C. courtesies to JOHN. JOHN introduces ANNA.

John. Allow me to introduce Miss Southen.

C. Miss Southen?

John. Yes, this young lady is the daughter of Luke Southen. He was lawfully married to a poor girl years before he left for In lia. They became separated, and while the father was growing rich, the mother died in the poorhouse, and left this child, who was adopted by some kind people in Brewster, and given a home and education. I have already shown Mr. Sage all the papers and other proofs, so that there is no necessity of my going into detail. Believe me, madam, I am very sorry to have to be the instrument of taking this fortune from you, but my duty to my departed friend, and his dying request, are sacred, and I felt obliged to do all in my power to discover poor Luke's daughter.

C. I don't believe it! Luke was never married. Oh, Ransom, say that he is wrong, that I am still the—

Sage. All that he says is only too true, madam. I have examined everything, and there is no use in my disputing his proofs.

C. And where's my good three thousand dollars gone? Oh, I'm a ruined woman! I shall end in the poorhouse myself!

ANNA advances toward CLARISSA.

Anna. Madam, when I get possession of my rights, I will return you all the money you have lost. You will at least accept this small present from me?

Enter KARL unseen, L.

C. No, I won't! I don't want your money. You are both big cheats and swindlers, I believe.

Karl. And so they are, madam! cheats of the worst kind!

John. What! Who are you that interferes with other people's affairs?

Anna. *(aside)* We are lost! Oh, why did I consent to this!

C. What did you say? Ransom, did you hear?

Sage. Sir, to whom am I indebted for this ungentlemanly entrance into my apartments, and interruption of my business transactions.

Karl. I will answer all questions in due time. As to your business-transactions, permit me to say that it is my business and not yours, which you and this—gentleman—have been settling. And as for the intrusion, I believe that the court room is a public place, and as you saw fit to make this one, I thought best to attend. And, madam, I say that these people are swindlers!

John. Have a care, sir—!

Karl. I'll take all the care of you that you'll ever require, before long. Now it is enough for you to know that I came from India to settle up Luke Southen's property; my name you will learn later.

John. (*aside*) Good heavens! can it be? It is the man I attacked in the thunder storm. I'll get away before he recognizes me.

Sage. Well, sir, will you inform me what you know of this property.

Karl. I will, sir! But as it is a long story, you had better be seated. (*all take seats; JOHN starts to leave, is stopped by KARL, who says*) You, sir, may be seated there, (*points to a chair directly in front of him*) and remain until I finish. Do you hear?

John. By what right do you command me? Stand aside and let me pass, or—

Karl. John Perkins, take that chair!

John. (*starts and exclaims*) My God! It is Frank Karl!

(*sinks into chair*)

Karl. You all know that Luke Southen left a large fortune. Well, before he died, he made a will leaving all of his property to a wife and child in this country. He was married to a poor girl in a village not far from here, though the marriage was kept a secret from his folks. Well, a daughter was born to them, and then after a while he left for India; but before he left he had a silver chain and locket made, of unique design, and then fastened it on the child's neck, he keeping the key and his wife agreeing not to remove it under any circumstance. After he had been in India about a year he was taken prisoner by the natives, and held for over two years; on being released he came home with all possible speed, only to find that his wife and child had gone to some city, no one knew where. He then began a search which lasted over three years, without his finding the least trace of them; the idea then struck him that perhaps his wife had followed him to India, and with this thought he visited that country a second time, only to be disappointed again. He then gave up all hopes of finding them yet wandered hopelessly about seeking them in vain. It was in this condition that I found him one morning, more dead than alive, and after keeping him for a time, he told me his story. From that time until his death we were the firmest and best of friends; later he became my partner, and we did a very prosperous business. He had at last found a clew to the whereabouts of his wife and was ready to start to this country, when he died. In making his will he made one clause and that was: "That I, Frank Karl, in case I did not succeed in finding his wife and daughter, should either accept his fortune as a last gift from him, or that I might dispose of it as I thought best."

Sage. And you have not discovered this heir? Allow me to introduce his second cousin, who I—

(*leads up CLARISSA*)

Karl. Yes, I know all about that. But before Luke died he gave into my trust the key to this locket and also the proofs of his marriage. There was but one person who witnessed all this besides

myself, and that was our overseer, a man whom we trusted implicitly, and to repay him for his honesty we settled a sum of money on him and gave him the business. Well, after the funeral, I started for here with the purpose of finding the heirs; after we were well at sea, who should I find on board but this same overseer, this—

John. Spare me, Frank, for the sake of my poor old mother, whom this blow would kill! For God's sake let me go!

(throws himself at KARL's feet)

Karl. Get up, sir! Well, this—man knew where to look for everything just as well as I, and one dark night he stabbed me in the back, and being interrupted before he had time to search me, threw me overboard, thinking that he would get the fortune into his own hands and in his search for the daughter—

Anna. I cannot bear this any longer! Oh, sir, I am not the daughter of Mr. Southen. I am only a tool of that wretch. This chain he had made that I might resemble the child as much as possible; and now I hope you will find the true party, although he declares she is dead.

Karl. But she still lives.

John. That's a lie! I saw her bur—

Karl. Silence, sir!

Anna. And now that I have done all that I can, I will ask you to forgive and excuse one in whose company I know you are ashamed to be.

(starts to go but is stopped by KARL)

Karl. May God bless you for this act; it makes me your friend, and I will see that no harm comes to you from him. Now, John Perkins, for the sake of your poor mother, I am going to let you go, but only on two conditions, and they are: First, that you leave this town at once, and this country before twenty-four hours; for if you are in America to-morrow at six o'clock, I'll have you arrested for attempted murder. The second is that you give me two checks for fifty thousand dollars each, one for this young lady and the other for your poor old mother, who has to support herself.

John. But that—that will beggar—

Karl. Enough of that! all you have to do is accept or I'll ring!
(starts toward the bell cord)

John. No, no! I'll sign!

Karl. Oblige me, Mr. Sage, by seeing that those checks are made out in a correct manner.

JOHN makes out checks and SAGE hands them to KARL.

Karl. That is all right and now don't you dare to stop the payment of these for if you do I'll hunt you down as I would a reptile. Now, sir, leave the country and don't you ever dare show your face here again, for I shall put a price on your capture. Now go!

(exit JOHN, L.)

Karl. As it is useless for me to say anything further, and as you probably wish to examine the papers, there they are.

Lays papers on table; SAGE and CLARISSA examine them. KARL turns to ANNA.

Karl. Young woman, you have acted nobly and I want you to accept this *(offers check)* as a part atonement for whatever wrong he may have done.

Anna. I cannot take it! I do not deserve this kindness from you. I was as much to blame as he.

Karl. Hush! Let me hear no more! You will accept it then as a present from me, as all he has was given him, for he never saved a cent. Take it! (*offers it again*) and may it bring you the happiness your face tells me you have never had, and which I am sure you deserve.

KARL puts check into her hands; she takes his hand and raising it to her lips.

Anna. This is too much for such as I!

(*weeps bitterly*)

Karl. There, there, don't cry any more! You will find my carriage at the door, and it will carry you wherever you wish to go.

(*exit ANNA, R.*)

Sage. I find everything satisfactory, with the exception that I should like to see the daughter.

Karl. Your wish shall be gratified. (*goes to door and calls BRAC*) Brac! Come this way, please.

SAGE and CLARISSA jump up and stand staring at her in wonder when she enters and bows to them.

Sage. What, Brac?

C. For the land sakes! I thought you was dead!

Brac. No, I'm not! But it's not Mr. Karl's fault, for he's been trying to kill me with kindness for the past year, and now he's given it up and promised to let me do as I like.

C. And so you are the heiress, and I'm your aunt! Well, I never!

Brac. Heiress! I an heiress?

Sage. Yes, Brac, you are the only daughter of Luke Southen and he left half a million dollars.

Brac. How funny! Why, that's just the same amount as you had left to you!

C. No, it was never left to me, and all I've left now is myself.

Brac. What do you mean? Didn't you get any—

C. Yes, I got the experience of spendin' all my hard earned savin's, and of bein' made a fool of!

Brac. Mr. Karl, is what they say true? Have I—am I to have all this money?

Karl. Yes, pet!

Brac. And can I do—can I use some of it now, just as I please?

Karl. Why, certainly.

Brac. Then I want you to give my guard enough so that she won't have to work any more.

Karl. You wish me to place enough to her credit so that she will be provided for the rest of her days; is that it, Brac?

Brac. Yes, sir! and you must take it out of my money.

C. You goin' to do this for me, Brac? Why, child, I never did anything for you to deserve it.

Brac. Then you will begin now by accepting my present and not saying anything more about it.

Sage. You are a remarkable young lady, and you deserve to be happy for helping your old friend in such a magnificent manner; and now, Clarissa, supposing we take a walk, and leave them for a time, as they must want to be alone after so important an event.

C. (*aside*) Oh, he smiles on me again. (*exit with SAGE*)

Brac. The hook is baited once more, and she'll make a catch this time, sure.

Karl. Well, Brac, now that you are rich I suppose that I can retire and not act the father over you any more, as you will not want for anything now.

Brac. Except a good kind father to plague and torment. No, sir! you can't go! You stole me once, and now you've got to keep me; and if you try to run away I'll—I'll prosecute you, now you see!

Karl. Ha! ha! ha! If you are going to try that, I think I'll stay, for I have a mortal dread of the law.

Brac. Then, kidnapper, beware of my vengeance! But, Mr. Karl, you never told me how you escaped after being thrown overboard that night.

Karl. Didn't I? Why, I was sure I told you everything.

Brac. So you did, except that, and that I was rich, you old fraud!

Karl. Ha! ha! ha! Well, I wanted to surprise you a little, and so kept it until I was sure of having it all settled.

Brac. Well, I'll forgive you this time; but your story?

Karl. Oh, it was simple enough; I was picked up by a man-of-war bound for home, after floating upon a plank for several hours, and was landed in Washington about one week after Jack landed in New York, and followed him here. You already know the rest.

Brac. And you have done all of this for my sake! Oh, Mr. Karl, I don't deserve to have such a friend.

Karl. Come, come, you must not talk to me like that any more; you know that I have no one else to be kind to, and so you might let me have my own way a little.

Brac. And so you shall! only forgive me this time and I promise that it shall not occur again. Oh, say! did you find out about—?

Karl. Yes, the dog is alive and so are the chickens, though they are two years old now, and—

Brac. No, no! I don't mean them. I—I—mean—

Karl. Dorcas Jones? Why, yes, she's alive and doing a smart business, and—

Brac. Oh, bother her business! I want to know if you heard anything from—

Karl. From that farmer chap? Yes, he's been married for some time and has one child a—

Brac. I don't care if they are twins! I don't mean him; I mean the other.

Karl. What other?

Brac. Why! Mr.—Why!—you know who I mean.

Karl. I don't know how I should?

Brac. But, you do! you know I mean Mr. Wilder.

Karl. Oh, ho! So he's the one all this fuss is about, is he? Well, Brac, he has lost all of his property.

Brac. I don't care anything about his property; I want him.

Karl. But, Brac, he is a very wild boy, I am told.

Enter BOB, L., and stands at back.

Brac. Then I'll tame him! so now!

Karl. Well, here he is, so you had better commence at once, or
• (*looks from one to the other*) Ha! ha! ha! (*exit KARL, R.*)

Brac. Mean old thing; he knew he was coming! I wonder if he heard me?

Bob. Eh—ahem—ah—Brac, don't you remember me?

Brac. (*bows very haughtily*) I beg pardon! Mr. Wilder, I presume. (*aside*) There, that's style!

Bob. (*aside*) Whew! what a set back! (*aloud*) Yes, M^{rs} Southen, I have the honor of being that individual. Allow me to congratulate you upon your return to the scenes of your childhood.

Brac. And allow me to thank you for all the favors and kind acts you did me in those days. (*aside*) I guess he's forgotten them by this time by the way he acts now!

Bob. Miss Southen, owing to some changes that have happened—

Brac. (*aside*) So he's got a girl, too, has he?

Bob. To me in this last year, I feel obliged to—I—I feel it——

Brac. (*aside*) I wonder if it hurts him much!

Bob. My duty to—to inform you——

Brac. Oh, I know all about them!

Bob. You have heard of them, then?

Brac. No, nor they of me, either!

Bob. I don't see how they could, for my financial——

Brac. Oh, bother! all you men think of is money. There's dear old Mr. Karl always wondering what he'll do with his.

Bob. Why did Mr. Karl go away without giving me a chance to speak to him?

Brac. Because he knew that he wasn't wanted! (*aside*) There!

Bob. Brac, do you mean it?

Brac. Bob, can you doubt it?

Bob. I don't know whether to believe it or not; and, Brac, you have not changed any? You are still my Brac? (*they embrace*)

Brac. Oh, Bob! Haven't you grown afraid of powder yet? (*kisses her*)

Bob. No, nor never will while I have you for my powder bearer. (*they sit*)

Brac. Don't you go to making fun of me; if you do you'll be sorry.

Bob. I heard you say when I came in, that you would tame me, so I suppose the sooner I give in (*enter KARL, R.*) the tamer you will make me.

Karl. (*aside*) I should say that she had you pretty well tamed now. (*aloud*) Ahem! (*Bob and Brac both jump up*)

Brac. Why! Mr. Karl!

Bob. Glad to see you back again, Mr. Karl.

(*advances and shakes hands*)

Karl. Thank you, Bob! you once saved my life, and I never had a chance to thank you for your noble conduct; and now all that I can say is, that if there is ever anything that I can do for you, in any way, don't fail to ask me.

Bob. Mr. Karl, the service that I rendered you was no more than any one else would have done, and I would prefer that it was not mentioned again. But, Mr. Karl, I have a great favor to ask of you.

Karl. Well, what is it?

Bob. I want you to give me Brac. I love her and I know that she returns my affection. I do not ask for her now, for as you know I am poor and have nothing but my hands to help me through life, but with your promise and her's and the best wishes of you both I shall have twice the strength and courage to fight and win life's

Brac. (*goes to KARL and says, aside*) Say "yes;" I've got money enough for both.

Karl. Well, Brac! What do you say to this?

Brac. I—I like Bob and—and—I don't want to let him go away from me, and you know I don't!

Karl. Whew! Well, sir! you can have her, but let me tell you that she is penniless, and after the wedding I will throw her over, as I can't afford to be hanging around here any longer.

Bob. Sir, if she is as you say, and stands on an equal footing with me, I will marry her at once, for it was only her money that made me want to wait.

Brac. I am not pen——

(*KARL stops her*)

Karl. If that is your reason, you need not hesitate any longer, for I assure you that she has no more property than you.

Bob. Oh, Brac!

Brac. Oh, Bob!

(*they embrace*)

Karl. There, that makes me young again.

Enter SAGE and CLARISSA, L.

Sage. Mr. Karl, I am about to make Miss Clarissa my wife.

Brac. He's landed at last.

Sage. And as we have decided to go and have it done quietly we would be greatly honored if you would all go over to the chapel with us.

Karl. Of course we will! but I insist on having a double wedding, so you two young folks hurry up and get ready. (*KARL takes BRAC aside and says*) Now not a word about your property until after you are married, and then you may tell him and lay the blame all on me; and as I want a private secretary, I will take Bob.

Brac. Oh, you dear old humbug! (*gives him a hug and kiss*)

Sage. Are we all ready?

C. I am, dear Ransom.

Bob. All ready.

Brac. And waiting.

Karl. Then we will go at once to the chapel and have the ceremony performed, and make these couples the happiest in the land.

(*prepare to exit as the*)

CURTAIN FALLS.

DUTCH JAKE; or, True Blue.

A Drama in 3 Acts, for 4 male and 3 female characters.

SYNOPSIS.

ACT I. Home of Major Fay in Virginia—Iron mines—Mrs. Fay and the Major do not agree—Maude Allen, the waif, finds a home—Harry Thurle and Ella Fay—The proposal—Henry Crinley, agent for mining company—Jake Schneider “a fresh arrival.”—The sale. Five thousand dollars missing—Jake accused—“I tinks I peen der cock of der walk!”

ACT II. Jake and Ella—Harry Thurle missing—Jake, “I vill finds him pooty quick now!”—Crinley and Ella—Jake protects Ella—The goose pond—Maude tells Major Fay of Crinley’s treachery—Plan to abduct Ella, frustrated by Maude—Jake Schneider’s dream and rescue of Harry—Ella leaves home—Crinley discovers Maude, his wife—Shows his hand—Jake appears and prevents murder—“I peen not afraid of dot coward man!”—Major Fay and Crinley—The insult—Kettle of hot water—Jake on deck.

ACT III. Crinley and Major Fay—The vigilance committee—Harry and the pocket-book—Maude Allen’s story—Storm—A dark night’s work—An attempt to murder Major Fay—Crinley shoots and wounds Harry—Jake shoots Crinley—His dying confession—Maude finds a brother in Harry—Dutch Jake, and happy ending.

PENN HAPGOOD.

A Drama in 3 Acts, for 10 male and 3 female characters.

SYNOPSIS.

ACT I. *Scene 1st.*—School-house—Penn and Carl—The threat—Foot-race between Carl, Dan and Jim—Penn’s defense—“Hang him! hang him!”—Carl to the rescue—Tar and feathers. *Scene 2d.*—Interview between Sprowl and Bythewood. *Scene 3d.*—Toby—Virginia and her father—Toby frightened—“De debble will git me, suah!”—Arrival of Penn—Toby—“I’s a master han’ to pick geese!”—Gus Bythewood, his Southern sentiments—Salina—“I am not a rebel!”—Mrs. Sprowl, the “lone widder,” interviews Penn. Mr. Villars threatened—Virginia intercedes—“We’ll give the Yankee three days to leave the country.”—Carl and Dan—“They mean to kill Penn”—Escape of Penn.

ACT II. *Scene 1st.*—Penn about to be hung—“Death, rather than a rebel!”—Carl saves Penn, by enlisting—Arrest of Mr. Villars and Stackridge—Virginia discovers Bythewood’s treachery. *Scene 2nd.*—Prisoners in the guard-house—The secret passage—Carl on guard—Escape of prisoners with Carl. *Scene 3d.*—Home of the Villars—Toby’s opinion—Virginia missing—Lysander and Salina—“Terrible news!”—Toby as a bootjack—“Toby shall not be whipped!” “Fire! fire!”

ACT III. *Scene 1st.*—Lysander and Silas—A plan to compel Mrs. Stackridge to reveal the cave where her husband is—*Scene 2nd.* Mrs. Sprowl, the “lone widder” visits Mrs. Stackridge’s home—arrival of Dan and Jim, who mistake her for Mrs. Stackridge—the whipping—Lysander arrives—“Scoundrels, you have whipped my mother!” *Scene 3d.*—Carl and Toby prisoners—Carl saves Toby a whipping—Carl leads the way to the cave. *Scene 4th.*—Cave—Penn and Virginia—Carl and Toby, with Lysander a prisoner—Escape of Lysander, and attempt to capture party at cave—Repulse and victory—Death of Bythewood and Lysander—Passport to the North.

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
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
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SYNOPSIS.

▲ACT I.—Scene 1st. Cabin of the ocean steamer Mary Jane—Passengers coming on board—Peter and Peleg meet—Isabel and Captain—Peleg and his Billow—a patent pin-cushion—Isabel's trouble—"Let's be gay and happy still"—Peter gives his first experience on board of a ship—"I never was so sick in mine life"—Kate, Isabel and the Captain—Peleg and Kate—Peleg kisses the cook—how she accepted his advances—"Mine Got in Himmel, I finds me somedings in mine room"—Hanibal, the darkey—a general ruption—"Hi golly! see 'em."

ACT II.—Scene 1st, Isabel and the Captain—Peleg afraid he is in the way—it reminds him of the time he went sparking Sall—Kate and Peleg—Hanibal comes in—disgust of Peleg—"dere nefer was a posey flower mitoudt stickers"—Peleg and Peter sea sick—Hanibal interrupts love scene between Peleg and Kate.

ACT III.—Scene 1st. Hanibal and Peter—"Oh! father, you signed my death warrant when you signed your will"—Peter relates his courting experience—Peleg in love—Peter's advice to the Captain—Peleg jealous of Peter.

ACT IV.—Isabel tells the Captain the conditions of her father's will—The Captain's declaration—"I must obey my father!"—The quarrel between Peter and Peleg, in which Hanibal appears—"Glorj mit der stars und stripes and the American eagle—and de cullud population"—Kate and the Captain—Kate tells a secret—Captain's despair—Kate endeavors to make Peleg propose, in which she succeeds as Hanibal appears—Peter's opinion of mudder-by-laws—Isabelle tells the Captain she is to marry Peter Polstine—Peter—"Dot vas me"—the despair of Isabelle when she discovers who Peter is—Peter refuses to marry Isabelle, for my wife's name will be Katrina—mine little Shermanny gal—Isabelle accepts the Captain—Kate and Peleg—matrimony—double wedding when the Mary Jane reaches port.

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Chisnell, an actor and
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SYNOPSIS.

ACT I.—A French cafe—"Cigars, beer, ham sandwiches!"—The man with the toothache—Mrs. Johnson, who has "smelled a mouse," in search of her husband, who finds it difficult to love only one woman—Adonis Montague, the 14th street masher—Mr. Johnson flirts with the veiled lady—Lifts the veil, "my wife!"—The agreement, "a tooth for a tooth, an eye for an eye." "If I catch you, look out!"—Mr. Johnson waiting for Evelena, is discovered by Mrs. Johnson—"Caught!"—"Remember the agreement!"—Mr. Johnson's horror of what his wife may do, as she is a French woman—The assistance of Montague, etc.

ACT II.—Home of Mr. Johnson—Return of Mrs. Johnson, a desperate woman—Mr. Johnson's arrival with peace offerings—"Nothing but a full confession."—His confession—"She was only a pocket-marked music scholar," and swears they only got as far as "do, re, me, fa, sol, la, si, do, do, si, la, sol, fa, me, re, do."—A cyclone in the bedroom—Adonis Montague arouses Mr. Johnson's jealousy—Medical students arrive—"Mr. Johnson!"—"Scoot, brother, scoot!"—Mr. Johnson locks his wife in the house, not aware of the students being hid in the rooms, and departs for the ball, as he leads the orchestra—Mrs. Johnson and students escape through window and start for the ball.

ACT III.—Dr. Boliver's ball—A mistake of Flip's, the usher. Arrival of Mrs. Don't-bother-me, New York Clipper and the Water-mellon brothers—The dance—Mr. Johnson recognizes Mrs. Don't-bother-me as his wife—"No more music unless she stops dancing!" She does not know that "shabby fiddler"—"Put him out, he is drunk!"—Out he goes—Return of Mr. Johnson disguised as a waiter—The threat—Mrs. Johnson angry and decides to run away—Mr. Johnson relates a funny story of a repentant lobster—He attempts suicide—He is forgiven—Advice of a repentant lobster.

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—OR,—

Hunted — Down.

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SYNOPSIS.

ACT I. *Scene 1st*—Home of Judge Dean—Mrs. Warren meets her son, Will Warren, (*alias* Frank Hayes) whom she has not seen for years—Nora and her boy lover—Interview between Ralph Monksly and Frank—A plan to get rid of Mrs. Warren—The "shadow"—Nora and Frank—The "ghost." Caesar Orangeblossom—Lost papers—Felix Bolton, the detective, on the trail. *Scene 2nd*—Caesar visits the office of Ralph Monksly—The drugged wine—"Caught in his own trap"—The quarrel—Dr. Radcliff—The bargain closed.

ACT II. *Scene 1st*—Judge Dean and the detective Bolton—Frank's villainy exposed to the Judge. *Scene 2nd*—The lunatic asylum—An answer to the advertisement—"H-a-n-k Hank F-i-n-n Finn—Hank Finn—Hank and the dog—Mrs. Warren, an inmate of the asylum—The brutal doctor—Rescue of Mrs. Warren by Hank.

ACT III. *Scene 1st*—The proposal—Judge Dean's request of Nora—Nora refuses Frank—His anger and threat—Legal papers—An English fortune—Mrs. Warren's decision—Abduction of Nora—The detective to the rescue. *Scene 2nd*—Nora in the asylum—Escape of Nora—Death of Dr. Radcliff—Papers found.

ACT IV. *Scene 1st*—Barney O'Toole in possession—He discovers a plan of robbery—The detective as a Dutch peddler—Frank and Ralph recognize him, capture and confine him in trunk—Barney releases him—The robbery—Death of Ralph—"I have kept my oath!"—*Scene 2nd*—Frank's villainy exposed—Barney, the rightful heir and son—Shadowed—The criminals to justice—Happy ending.

Two Aunt Emilys; or, Quits.

A Farce in 1 Act, by Martie E. Tibbets, for 8 female characters. This is an excellent little farce, consisting of light comedy, easy acting, racy dialogue and a good moral.

SYNOPSIS.

Quarrel between Dinah and Biddy. Aunt Emily, whose money the girls are trying to get. Mrs. Morton and the telegram. Dismay of Helen and Grace. Dinah lays down the law. Onions and cayenne pepper. Arrival of Belle Morton and her teacher, who is the rich Aunt Emily. Belle's joke on Aunt Emily. The long unheard of sister found. Belle's joke on the girls discovered. The poor Aunt Emily secures a home. Belle gets even and calls it "Quits."

THE COMMERCIAL DRUMMER.

A Drama in 3 Acts, by Thorn Melross, for 6 male and 2 female characters. This piece is immense. It is printed from the author's original manuscript, and has been produced with great success by the American Theatre Co.

SYNOPSIS.

ACT I. Home of the late Richard Marlow. Interview between Frank Ross and Lawyer Dudley. The pious deacon and Verda Miller. Reading the will. Joe's dog collar. Richard Marlow, the false heir. The child of the Dark Continent in trouble. Three villains. "Ten thousand to silence my tongue!" Zadio, the deserted wife of John Dudley. An attempted murder. Joe's little "barker" interferes. Deacon and Joe. Frank and Verda; his resolve to become a "Commercial Drummer." Zadio gives Verda a home. Mr. Dudley's proposal to Verda, and the misunderstanding. Murder of Deacon Foote, and Frank accused. The struggle, "life or death!"

ACT II. Zadio, Verda, and the tramp. "Painted benches." "My kingdom for some soup!" Booth and Zadio. Attempted murder of Zadio; Ashtor, the tramp interferes, and makes Dudley hand over a "William." Booth and the Indian. Too much beer. The stolen will. Joe in the barrel. Target shooting. Verda's refusal to marry Dudley. Abduction of Verda, and Joe knocked down.

ACT III. Ashtor and Booth. Corn plasters; "There's millions in them!" Olie, the Swede. Zadio, the Census taker. Two "bummers!" Rescue of Verda by Zadio. Frank discovered by Richard, as Booth. "He must die!" A job for Olie. "In the soup!" Hot and cold boxes. Olie and Booth to the rescue of Zadio. Explanations. A new version of McGinty. A love scene. Capture of Verda. Supposed death of Booth. Fright and death of Dudley. Capture of Richard. Frank and Verda secure the fortune at last. Zadio avenged and the "Commercial Drummer" sells corn plasters no more.

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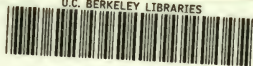
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